

A Balance Sheet on Sixty Years of Soviet Foreign Policy—Part II

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Last month I described eleven "successes" of Soviet foreign policy since the October, 1917, Revolution. Now it is time to turn to Soviet "failures" and to the underlying factors that have shaped Soviet policy in the past and that should be weighed by Western policymakers in the years ahead. Partially by coincidence and partially with an eye to symmetry, I again come up with the number eleven.

These assessments of success and failure are based on my own research, stimulated and refined by a survey (both written and oral) that tapped the views of other Soviet specialists visiting the Kennan Institute, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. The "balance sheet," of course, represents my own judgment. Readers will no doubt make their own distinctions, thus reducing or expanding the list; some may quarrel about whether a certain event ought to be rated a failure or a success given *Moscow's* apparent objectives; but I think the following represents a fair account in accord with the facts as we know them.

1. *The Bolsheviks failed in their number-one foreign policy objective during the years 1917-20: to ignite a successful Communist revolution in Germany or other European countries.* After witnessing the collapse of revolutionary movements in several Central European countries the Bolsheviks hoped the Red Army might still topple the Versailles system if it could carry its counterattack against Poland through the gates of Warsaw. But the Red Army was repulsed, and the Bolsheviks soon resigned themselves to the "temporary stabilization of capitalism." From this they slid quickly toward the doctrine that it was both feasible and desirable to build "socialism in one country."

Having reconciled themselves to the need to cultivate

gradually the soil of revolution abroad, many Soviet leaders still wanted and expected that the USSR would serve as a pioneering example and father figure for other revolutions that would emerge in its image. Though sixty years have passed since the October Revolution, no major industrial country has elected to follow the Soviet example. After some border regions were returned to Moscow's domain in the 1917-21 civil war, Communists did not come to power outside the USSR except in Outer Mongolia (after 1921) until the end of World War II, when Communist forces won in Yugoslavia and China (mostly by their own efforts) and rode to power elsewhere in Eastern Europe and North Korea on the heels of the Red Army. The closest communism came to a triumph by free elections was in Czechoslovakia, where a plurality of the population was both pro-Russian and pro-Communist after the war. The 1948 coup, while constitutional in form, was Stalinist in content; and Moscow used a mailed fist to reimpose its will when the Czechs and Slovaks threatened to go their own way in 1968.

Recent decades have seen Communist and other leftist regimes employing Marxist-Leninist slogans come to power in Cuba, Chile, and many Third World countries, but their driving impulse has generally been national liberation rather than emulation of the USSR (or of China). Portugal's rejection of Stalinist communism may have sounded the death knell for any hope that a West European people would elect to join the Soviet camp. Eurocommunism is still evolving on the Continent, but Moscow's denunciation in June, 1977, of Spanish Communist leader Santiago Carrillo indicates sharp limits to Soviet patience with autonomous polycentrism in the West. If Communist parties are ever to win power in Spain, Italy, or France, they may have to be truly democratic and perhaps anti-Soviet.

Though the Soviet experiment has kept the ideas of Marxism-Leninism before the world, it has done much to discredit them. Some may rationalize that these ideas were not given a fair test because of the political culture and backward economic conditions prevailing in czarist

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Russia. Others conclude—rightly, I think—that many of the worst features of Soviet rule are inherent in the system's totalitarian credo and consequent mode of operation.

2. *So long as foreign revolutions did not materialize, the Bolsheviks and their successors wanted normal government-to-government and trading relations with the non-Communist world. The Soviets have kept both fronts alive—revolutionary and conventional diplomatic. Trying to have the best of both worlds, the Soviet regime has not reaped fully the benefits of either.* Kremlin efforts to promote revolution have left a deep residue of mistrust—not only in the West but among non-Communist Third World regimes. The more leftist movements aspiring to lead the toiling workers and peasants have hardly been inspired to emulate the Soviet model when they find Moscow entering into intimate relations with the very governments it terms "capitalist-imperialist."

Though the Bolsheviks made public relations diplomacy an art form, it probably cost them more than it gained. It went far toward alienating Western governments and widening a credibility gap. Indeed it is hard to think of any major gain for Soviet diplomacy achieved by manipulating mass opinion abroad. (Franklin D. Roosevelt and the U.S. media shaped American opinion during World War II by, for example, the film *Mission to Moscow*, but this was a product "made in USA" to which Uncle Joe contributed only marginally.)

Since Communist revolution does not turn out to have been in the cards for the West in the first sixty years of the Soviet regime, nor in the foreseeable future, Moscow's revolutionary endeavors have pointlessly complicated its efforts at rapprochement. The Kremlin, in short, has antagonized Western governments to no useful end, while enhancing but slightly revolutionary developments abroad.

Predicting capitalist hostility to the new Socialist regime, the Bolsheviks' actions made this a self-fulfilling prophecy: Their words and deeds, at home and abroad, threatened not only the war aims but the domestic order of the belligerent Western governments. All this helped to bring on Western intervention in the Russian civil war, producing wounds on all sides that have taken decades to close.

Soviet moves toward the end of World War II—from Poland to Iran to divided Germany and Korea—again inflamed East-West relations. Whenever the will of the Western allies has flagged, it has been periodically revived by some Soviet move at odds with Moscow's professed desire for peaceful coexistence and noninterference in the domestic affairs of other states. In recent years the Kremlin has even proved adept at driving many West European Communists to embrace both NATO and the European Economic Community.

3. *Moscow has also alienated its most important potential ally among Communist powers, China. Exploitive policies reaped some short-term gains for the*

USSR but left the Kremlin with a powerful, hostile neighbor and a major challenger within the Communist movement. From the early 1920's until the early 1960's the Kremlin behaved like a big brother toward China. It provided not only advice and assistance but, frequently, directives that may have been compatible with Soviet aims and experiences but were not rooted in Chinese needs and conditions.

It turned out that neither the Kuomintang Nationalists nor the Chinese Communists would follow Soviet advice very long if it conflicted with their perceived needs. The 1927 massacre of Chinese Communists by their Kuomintang associates showed the degree to which Soviet and Comintern preaching was out of touch with Chinese realities. From that time on Moscow would never regain the confidence of either the Nationalists or Communists.

The Russian Communists erred too by frequently promising what they refused later to deliver. The 1919 Karakhan Declaration seemed to renounce all unequal treaties imposed by czarist Russia on China, but the Kremlin has to this day endeavored to perpetuate most pre-1917 border arrangements with China. In 1945 Moscow won Western approval for Soviet acquisition of contested territories in the Far East and a perpetuation of Soviet domination in formally independent Outer Mongolia. If this were not provocation enough to the Chinese—Nationalists and Communists alike—Moscow's 1950 alliance with the People's Republic recreated many features of unequal treaties in earlier times (joint Sino-Soviet stock companies, joint control of key railroads, and Soviet naval bases in Port Arthur-Dairen). These extensions of Soviet power were canceled in the mid-1950's, and Khrushchev inaugurated substantial assistance to China on many fronts. But this honeymoon proved short-lived as Moscow reneged on the "new defense technology" (nuclear) pact in 1959 and pulled back all Soviet technicians in 1960, taking blueprints with them when possible. Khrushchev seems to have played a double game, promising the Chinese nuclear aid while rushing to conclude arms control agreements with the West that would cut off the Chinese program before it produced a bomb. Khrushchev achieved only modest arms controls—the limited test ban—while giving Peking a running start toward the bomb it tested in 1964; and the whole matter was handled so as to alienate the Chinese entirely.

Soviet duplicity was underscored also in 1958. Moscow brandished a stick as though willing to risk nuclear war to defend Peking's interests in the Taiwan Straits, but in reality delayed this threat until Washington and Peking had already agreed to negotiate.

In the late 1960's and most of the 1970's Moscow appears to have been more "reasonable" than Peking about reconciling their differences. During this time the Soviet connection has often become a hot potato in Chinese domestic politics. Virtually every alleged Chinese traitor from the mid-1930's to the early 1970's has been accused of a pro-Soviet orientation. (The "Gang of Four" has so far been spared this stigma.)

No doubt there would have been important differences between Russia and China no matter how Moscow and Peking finessed their disputes. But the Russian bear, at

least until recent years, tried to ride the Chinese dragon, directing it hither and yon, feeding it what and when Moscow wanted. This treatment helped produce a foe whose breath of fire is now aimed at the USSR.

4. *Soviet foreign policy helped Hitler seize power in Germany, thereby creating a long-term threat to Soviet security and, for more than a decade, practically destroying the Communist movement within Germany.* Fanatical in its insistence that the German Communists avoid collaboration with the Social Democrats, Moscow played a key role in bringing the National Socialists to victory. This position flowed from some quirks of the power struggle within the Kremlin, but its roots lay in the Bolshevik dogma, "the worse, the better," consoling Communists with the myth that a rightist, Kornilov-type *putsch* would evoke a Communist victory.

To Stalin's credit, he and his colleagues quickly changed gears and sought collective security measures to contain Hitlerist expansion. But the Soviet Union had already helped Hitler to power, and Moscow's record of double-dealing did nothing to inspire confidence that the Kremlin would now be a reliable partner in defending the status quo.

5. *The Kremlin failed in its campaign for collective security arrangements to defend the status quo against Japanese, Italian, and German expansionism.* The network of nonaggression pacts and alliances constructed by Soviet diplomacy through the interwar years collapsed like a deck of cards when put to the test in the late 1930's. These failures, however, were due as much to the flabby will of British and French leaders (not to speak of U.S. isolationism) and the chauvinism of Hitler's East European targets as to the character of Soviet policy.

6. *Though Moscow was able to buy almost two years' grace in 1939-41 in which to build its own forces and expand Soviet control over a wide belt of Europe, Stalin's policies left the USSR unprepared to contain Operation Barbarossa when Hitler decided to move.* Stalin's policies had wiped out much of the Red Army officer corps. He had strained Soviet resources during the Winter War against Finland and alienated the Baltic and other peoples who came under Soviet domination in 1939-40. He disgusted potential allies in the West by the policies of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, and did little or nothing to alleviate the rebellious nationalisms within Soviet border republics that led many to welcome the Germans as liberators. Appeasing Hitler and fearing to incur his wrath, Stalin failed to have his forces combat-ready to repulse the German invasion.

Though the Red Army eventually drove the Germans all the way to Berlin, this could have been done at much lower cost if the country had been better prepared. More than one-tenth of the population and one-third of the economic wealth of the country perished in the war.

7. *Though the war permitted Moscow to foster Soviet-regimes all over Eastern Europe, this was done in a*

way that alienated much—perhaps most—of the populations in the region, even those historically pro-Russian such as the Czechs. Not only did Soviet policies turn potential friends into foes, they made it more difficult for local Communists to win popular support and legitimacy. The most popular regimes in Eastern Europe, beginning with Tito's and continuing through Ceausescu's, have appealed to anti-Soviet patriotism as much as or more than to communitarian ideals.

Moscow's pillaging of East Europe's natural and manufactured resources from 1945 to the early 1950's extracted about \$14 billion worth of goods and services, according to Indiana University economist Paul Marer*—a sum larger than what the United States invested in Western Europe through the Marshall Plan from 1948 to 1951. While Washington's policies generated loyal allies and prosperous trading partners, Moscow provoked Yugoslavia's defection (1948), open rebellions in East Germany (1953), Poland and Hungary (1956), and left many other countries seething in discontent. Worse, Russia's *diktat* compelling the East Europeans to withdraw from the European Recovery Program ruined their competitive edge, so that thirty years later they can sell little but sausage and raw materials in the West. Moscow now finds it necessary to subsidize some East European economies (most notably, Czechoslovakia's and Poland's) to keep ferment below the exploding point.

Analysts such as William E. Griffith comment that czarist rule in nineteenth-century Poland was also based on hegemony rather than legitimacy. Griffith doubts that Russia could rule Poland or any other part of Eastern Europe except by force in the most fundamental sense. This judgment does not take sufficient account of the *tabula rasa* that existed by 1945. Operating unilaterally or jointly with the West (for example, in the framework of the four-power alliance suggested by Washington in 1946-47), the USSR could have ensured that Eastern Europe was ruled by friendly, even "progressive" regimes, without resorting to the repression that makes the region so volatile and difficult to control. Not only has Russia been forced to act as a gendarme to police its own allies, but it has generated conditions in which the loyalty of the East European armies under battlefield conditions is far from certain.

8. *As in Eastern Europe and China, so in the Third World: Moscow has alienated many potential friends and allies, frittering away the good will and other advantages enjoyed by Soviet diplomacy in the 1950's.* Soviet influence in the Third World declined sharply as Moscow recoiled from the 1927 China debacle, turned its attention to Hitler, and then, in Stalin's later years, treated Third World leaders such as Gandhi as stooges of Western imperialism. After Stalin's death, however, Khrushchev launched a multifaceted campaign to march toward London through Delhi. The tactics were to

*See his "Has Eastern Europe Become a Liability to the Soviet Union?—the Economic Aspect," in *The International Policies of Eastern Europe*, edited by Charles Gati.

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displace Western influence by Soviet military aid, technological transfers, barter and other liberal trade agreements, summit diplomacy, and cultural exchanges. The USSR could claim to be the selfless promoter of Third World liberation; Moscow’s holdings from czarist or Stalinist imperialism were tucked in remote corners of Asia (or Eastern Europe). The erstwhile imperialists of Western Europe were in retreat and Washington was caught up in the double bind created by John Foster Dulles, who declared neutralism to be immoral and urged doctrinal resistance to state ownership.

Moscow exploited these advantages skillfully for five or six years but then overplayed its hand. By the early 1960’s Soviet policies in the Third World were becoming expensive relative to the gains for specific Soviet objectives: Soviet representatives were behaving like “Ugly Russians”; Soviet missions were asked to leave certain African countries. Despite many rebuffs, Moscow has continued its military and economic expansion in the Third World in the 1970’s, suggesting that a warrior class with vested interests in expansion for its own sake has now cultivated a strong claim on Soviet resources. While such expansion may be gratifying for admirals, spies, and state traders, its scale and costs may have become a drain on the Soviet economy and a liability in the effort to pursue détente and trade with the West.

Moscow’s potential for winning the Third World away from the West or contributing to a constructive solution of Third World problems with the West is strangely limited, considering the vast resources at Moscow’s disposal. The Kremlin is unwilling to spare major resources for foreign aid, contending it bears no responsibility for the damage caused by rapacious Western imperialism. Its high dams and steel mills have won much applause in the Third World, but recognition of their dire side-effects causes mounting anxieties in many quarters. Barter arrangements (for example, cotton for Soviet machinery) have been appreciated, but the fact is that most Third World countries prefer the West as a source for high-quality technology, education, ideas, and markets.

The Kremlin is also inhibited from joining the West in collaborative projects in the Third World. It is aware of its competitive disadvantage in many areas, and of its ideological vulnerability to charges of collaborating with capitalism.

9. *The USSR has made many constructive moves to reduce tensions and slow the arms competition, but*

Soviet leaders—by omission and commission—have also done much to thwart their own interests in détente and arms control. The Khrushchev and Brezhnev regimes have desperately wanted to divert resources from the military complex to the civilian sector. But Moscow remains locked in patterns that require it to spend twice as much per capita on defense as the United States in order to sustain strategic equivalence. Arms accords to date have done little to slow the destructive force or the cost of the arms buildup.

In assessing Soviet military strength, moreover, we should not look at Moscow’s intentions and capacities apart from its adversaries.* Though the Kremlin relishes its image of parity, Washington commands more than twice as many strategic warheads as Russia, with an incipient capacity for a disarming first strike. The Kremlin has introduced few serious proposals in SALT, preferring to react to U.S. initiatives. While this tack confers certain bargaining advantages on Moscow, the slow pace and passive character of Soviet negotiating style have failed to strengthen forces in the West that might have helped abort the testing and deployment of weapons developed in the United States some years ahead of the USSR (MIRV and cruise missiles, for example). To be sure, SALT I set sharp limits on ABM defenses, but Moscow almost missed this limitation as it ignored American pleas for mutual restraint in the 1960’s.

While Moscow has sought to limit nuclear spread, the grim reality is that practically every major atomic power, potential as well as actual, is anti-Soviet. This fact alone speaks volumes about the failure of Soviet diplomacy. This political condition cannot be diffused by more Soviet arms or by any quick fix.

Moscow’s strategic gains are considerably qualified by the fact that the USSR is virtually surrounded by hostile nuclear powers, from NATO Europe to China. At the same time, Chinese forces cannot yet reach the United States, and Soviet nuclear forces may not be stationed in or serviced from Cuba—Washington’s only hostile neighbor. Soviet planners must worry about Chinese-Western collusion in a two-front campaign against the USSR, perhaps synchronized with paralyzing

*Kennan recalls a case in 1947 in which General Alfred Gruenther asserted that Soviet armies could reach the Pyrenees in a week. What about the resistance that Western armies might put up? Gruenther replied that his staff did not figure that in—they looked only at the raw capacity—as if Soviet jeeps could drive straight through Europe like tourists!

revolts in Moscow's East European vassal states. Such fears are probably compounded by Moscow's ancient inferiority complex about Russia's technological backwardness and by anxiety that the West (or China) may make some weapon breakthrough that could put the USSR at a severe disadvantage.

10. *Khrushchev brought the world to the brink of a nuclear disaster by the 1962 Cuban missile gambit, casting doubt on the sagacity of Kremlin policymaking. His subsequent retreat under American pressure helped expose the relative weakness of Moscow's sea-reach and strategic power.*

If Khrushchev had wanted to redress the strategic balance in light of the U.S. Minuteman and Polaris buildup, he failed, for Moscow was compelled to pull back its missiles from Cuba. Indeed, Washington has interpreted its 1962 understandings with Moscow to mean that no Soviet nuclear missiles may be stationed in or serviced from Cuba. If Khrushchev had wanted to achieve some kind of diplomatic trade-off involving Berlin, he went away empty handed. If he had wanted to acquire a U.S. pledge not to invade Cuba, he got it—but was such a pledge needed after the Bay of Pigs fiasco? And even if the White House still burned to overthrow Castro, was the security of the Cuban regime worth the risks entailed for Moscow? (Even more likely than a nuclear exchange was a limited U.S. air strike against Cuba.) Indeed, were any conceivable Soviet objectives worth the risks incurred by an action so likely to evoke a serious U.S. response? Besides obtaining a U.S. pledge not to invade Cuba, Moscow was reassured that U.S. missiles would eventually be withdrawn from Turkey, a move already ordered by Kennedy months before.

Moscow's embarrassment at having to back down led many Kremlin leaders to swear "never again," deepening their determination to overcome military inferiority. Other Soviet leaders held the whole episode against Khrushchev, viewing it as another example of the hare-brained subjectivism for which he was ultimately ousted.

On the positive side, both Washington and Moscow were sufficiently sobered by their 1962 brush with disaster to seek institutionalized ways to ensure better communications (for instance, the hot line) and to initiate limited arms controls.

Although not in the same ballpark with the Cuban affair, Khrushchev's earlier missile-rattling over Egypt (1956), the Taiwan Straits (1958), and Berlin (1958-61) must also be rated actions that could have provoked a major war had the Western governments failed to keep their cool. His repeated boasts about Soviet military prowess in the late 1950's also helped steel NATO's resolve and spurred Western arms buildups.

Soviet policies in the Middle East are shrouded in considerable mystery, but Moscow appears to have followed a rather high-risk strategy in the region, arming the Arab states before and after their recurrent *jihads* against Israel. To be sure, Moscow's refusal to provide Cairo with more and better arms was one reason for the expulsion of Soviet forces from Egypt in 1972. While the Kremlin has exercised some restraint, its diplomats,

soldiers, intelligence services, and propaganda in the Middle East have a strong track record of playing with fire. As in the Cuban case, the returns have hardly been worth the candle, while the close calls with an expanded conflict have been chilling. As in the Cuban retreat, Moscow's image has suffered from the defeats of its protégés and Egypt's charges that the USSR has shortchanged them. The closest and most sober study of Soviet policy in the region in the 1970's—Alvin Z. Rubenstein's *Red Star on the Nile* (1977)—concludes that Moscow has wanted to keep the Middle East caldron boiling without seething over.

Kremlin policy in black Africa has not yet put Soviet and Western forces on a collision course, but it has served to inflame racial hatreds there rather than work for a nonviolent solution. The Angola operation, while achieving a local success in 1976, went far toward scuttling the momentum toward détente. Only time will tell how deeply the recurrent conflicts in the Horn or southern tip of Africa embroil the great powers.

The Kremlin has kept back from evoking confrontations where U.S. forces have already been heavily committed, as in Indochina or in Korea. Compared to U.S. overseas combat activities since 1945, Soviet operations have been limited indeed. Nonetheless, what Moscow has done with surrogates in Berlin and Cuba or elsewhere has come much closer to provoking a major war than any U.S. action.

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11. *The Kremlin's foreign policy has served to compound many of its domestic problems. Moscow has felt that it needs Western technology and trade to modernize its economy, and it has managed to achieve significant technological transfers in waves from the 1920's to the 1970's. But the Kremlin also fears that closer links with the outside world will hasten the growth of bourgeois values, adding to the decibel level of liberal and nationalist dissent and raising flood tides of material expectations. Meanwhile, continued arms racing interferes with Moscow's ability to devote more of its own resources to the country's economic development. The Kremlin is again left with the worst of several worlds: an unsteady peace and heavy arms burden; a population hungry for Western ideas and products; an erosion of*

popular zeal for the Communist idea and widening doubts about the legitimacy and wisdom of the Communist party's vanguard role.⁶

This double bind provides a terrible commentary on the achievements of sixty years: The regime fears not only foreign adversaries but its own people.

The achievements and failures of Soviet policy may be weighed according to different standards. We have tried to evaluate them in terms of the goals of the Soviet leaders, as these goals are perceived by outsiders. A complicating factor is that the goals may change, depending upon the Soviet leadership. Perhaps a Stalin or Beria could reason that the expansion of Soviet controls into Eastern Europe from 1939 to 1948 was worth the costs of World War II. But all those costs are still not accounted for, and the Soviet manpower pool is almost sure to contract uncomfortably in the 1980's.

Apart from calculations of material power, can any regime be said to have been a success if its policies have led to human destruction and human suffering on the scale known to the USSR in the past sixty years? The series of catastrophes was almost unending from the October Revolution until the late 1940's: civil war; deportations of peasants and national minorities; three major famines; several sweeping purges; one world war and associated civil strife. At least fifty million souls have perished unnaturally or emigrated since 1917; they have not reproduced themselves; and their talents—usually above average—have been removed from the genetic and cultural pool. Their relatives and associates have been traumatized. Those not traumatized may have become less human, compelled to erect a wall to shut themselves off from others' sufferings. Millions of other Soviet citizens have turned inward to materialistic or mystical privatism.

Next to these miseries some of the other hardships imposed on the Soviet people by the regime seem minor: sacrifice of consumer goods to the gods of war and heavy industry; sacrifice of industrial and agricultural efficiency to ideological fetishism; sacrifice of the arts to party-line dictation; sacrifice of environmental quality to material growth; sacrifice of national cultures to one Socialist in content if not form; sacrifice of political freedom to the enhancement of party control.

The balance sheet ends with the question, Does the government of any other major country feel itself so vulnerable to domestic dissent or foreign pressure as the leadership of the USSR? How has it happened that the world's largest country, with the world's third largest population and a greater capacity for economic self-sufficiency than any other has these problems:

- It is surrounded on all sides by hostile neighbors, including its putative allies.

- Its economy yields the second largest national product in the world but appears incapable of producing modernization or living standards comparable to the West without continuous injections of foreign capital and technology.

- It is ruled by an élite that seems to fear any sign of spontaneity by its subjects and depends heavily on police controls to quell dissent.

Let it be readily admitted that the successes and failings of any government's policies are due in part to factors beyond its control. Geography, for example, puts a continuous restraint on Soviet mobility at sea and compels Moscow to stand watch over a long border. Geography also permits defense-in-depth, helpful in World War II but probably less important against a missile attack. Geography bestows on the USSR the most self-sufficient raw-material base possessed by any country in the world but bequeaths the country poor soil and a savage climate. Weather, many analysts believe, is the single most important factor shaping Soviet economic fortunes. More generally, *fortuna* often seems as decisive in world as in personal affairs, exemplified by the timing of a move that could be disastrous today but beneficial tomorrow. Serendipity, Herman Kahn reminds us, is as important as synergy in producing policy outcomes hard to anticipate.

The political culture and social-economic development inherited by the Bolsheviks in 1917 presented them with modes of operation and habits of thought that could be altered only gradually. Both the strengths and the weaknesses of traditions—Russian and other nationalities—have provided the clay from which the Bolsheviks sought to shape a new man and new policies.

Moscow has also had to contend with attitudes and decisions in other countries over which Soviet policies could have but little influence. Other governments had their own problems, their own strengths and weaknesses, which would be shaped only marginally by Soviet policies. Generally speaking, Soviet initiatives have been met with great reserve and suspicion in the West, while many Third World regimes—at least initially—were predisposed to welcome Soviet proposals ostensibly aimed at helping them overcome abject dependence and backwardness.

Recognizing the limitations, both domestic and external, confronting Soviet diplomacy, the work of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is generally credited with a high degree of professionalism. From Chicherin, who succeeded Trotsky as Commissar of Foreign Affairs in 1918, to the present day, Soviet diplomats have usually coped effectively with the problems and opportunities presented them.

The professionalism of Soviet diplomacy has been accented by the dilettantism of other governments. The standard components of Soviet diplomatic successes, according to George F. Kennan, have been: "one part Soviet resourcefulness and singlemindedness of pur-

⁶As Kennan has noted (letter of September 25, 1977), the Soviet regime has totally failed "to make of its own dogmatic ideology a source of spiritual sustenance, inspiration, and enthusiasm for the population of the Soviet Union itself—to make of it, that is, a substitute for the religion it was supposed to replace. Instead of this at the end of sixty years: apathy, cynicism, hypocrisy, individual acquisitiveness, and an appalling spread of alcoholism."

pose; two parts amateurism, complacency, and disunity on the part of the West."^{*}

Soviet fortunes in the Third World have been shaped in large part by the heritage of the Third World's colonial ties with the West—resentment against erstwhile colonial exploitation combined with strong cultural and even linguistic ties with the former metropolises. Moscow has had to carry the albatross of official atheism, sooner or latter a stumbling block in most Third World states. It must now live with the charges, as formulated in Peking, that the USSR practices "great-nation chauvinism" and "social imperialism" even more rapacious than Western imperialism. Often less sensitive to local feelings than other foreigners, "ugly Russians" abroad have offended many Third Worlders, as have the racist attitudes many Asians and Africans have encountered in the USSR.

For the USSR, as for other actors, a single feature frequently generates both strengths and weaknesses. Thus centralized political and economic controls have permitted the Kremlin to mobilize the country's resources with less public accountability than would be needed in Western democracies. It is able to act with greater dispatch and secrecy, to adhere to a course with greater persistence than is typical where public moods bear heavily on policy choices. The command economy is less subject to cyclical depression than free enterprise systems, but also seems much less innovative. Centralization of decisionmaking makes possible disastrous policies more readily avoided or corrected if surfaced for public debate. If a Lenin or a Khrushchev is at the helm, centralization may facilitate dynamism; if an aging Stalin or Brezhnev, paralysis or plodding caution.

Moscow is licked into a rigid posture by its desire to uphold existing boundaries with all its neighbors. Having taken all that was takeable in the course of World War II, the Kremlin now finds it necessary to defend its boundaries and those of Eastern Europe on an all-or-nothing basis: If Moscow would return the disputed southern Kurile Islands to Japan, this could facilitate a general improvement in Soviet-Japanese relations, perhaps giving Moscow greater access to Japanese technology and capital. Similarly, lands taken from Rumania seem to fuel anti-Soviet nationalism in Bucharest. But whatever the merits of the specific situation, the Kremlin fears that if it gives an inch others will want a mile.

The buildup of Soviet military and economic power has been abetted by a wide range of factors, from abundant resources to centralized controls to abiding fears of foreign intervention and a messianic drive to carry the glories of communism to others. It has also been aided by technology transfers from the West that help to modernize the Soviet military-industrial complex. On the other hand, Moscow's determination to enhance its military might—even at prolonged cost to Soviet living standards—has been spurred by certain Western policies. Just as the perceived Soviet threat has helped motivate Western alliances and military buildups to restrain Soviet expansionism, so Soviet determination to match the West militarily has been strengthened by what Moscow has read as threatening intentions and capabilities in the West and, more recently, in China.

Foreign policy includes everything a government does that affects its image abroad. The fact that the Kremlin has relied so heavily upon the police establishment and central dictation to run its own country has undermined the appeal of the Soviet model abroad. It has achieved fragile domestic controls at great cost to popular enthusiasm. How dear this could be in wartime was seen when Hitler's armies were welcomed as liberators in the Ukraine and elsewhere.

Despite many defections, the fortitude and stoicism of the Russian and other Soviet peoples were decisive in repulsing Hitler's armies. In noncrisis times, however, these same traits lead toward a passive quietism that tolerates an élitist, exploitative regime and its adventures abroad. Such quietism asks little more than a certain predictability, an absence of arbitrary repression, and gradual improvement in living standards. A deadly circularity ensues as centralization stifles innovation and passivity permits greater centralization. Accustomed to such an order, the regime rejects reforms that might impart new life to the system, compelling the freshest spirits to turn inward, to revolt, or to emigrate.

Kremlin power struggles have sometimes obstructed foreign policy planning. Thus Stalin's animus toward the German Social Democrats in the late 1920's probably reflected his fear that their prosperity might redound to the benefit of the Right Opposition within the USSR, whose views inclined toward moderate socialism. But he also feared Trotskyist tendencies within the German Communist party and in the Communist International *apparatus*. Better perhaps to strengthen Hitler, at least temporarily, than that German political factions subvert Stalin's hold on the Kremlin. Later, during and after World War II, Stalin became increasingly dependent upon Beria's police establishment to protect him against a resurgence of the party *apparatus*. But Beria was against a more liberal policy in Poland or Czechoslovakia, thus undermining chances for a continuation of wartime solidarity with the West. Still later, to take a case from the mid-1950's, the thrust of Soviet arms control policy was vitiated as disarmament became a political football in the struggles between Molotov, Malenkov, and Khrushchev.

The exigencies of the Sino-Soviet ideological rift have helped make Moscow's policy more rigid. They pressured Khrushchev to trumpet the Soviet Union's commitment to assisting wars of national liberation, thus raising anxieties in Washington more than were justified by Soviet deeds. The competition has led Moscow and Peking to invest resources in arcane struggles to influence leftist and nationalist movements around the world.

*Here he is talking about the Rapallo Treaty, brought about by Chicherin's skillful exploitation of the circumstances that arose at Genoa, and by the weakness of Western diplomacy—its smugness, superficiality, national-emotional bias, dilettantism of execution, enslavement to the vagaries of domestic politics in the democratic setting; and not least, the "inexcusable denial of American presence and interest at this critical moment" (*Russia and the West Under Lenin and Stalin* [1961]).

Because Prince Sihanouk was in Peking the Kremlin stood by Lon Nol until he was defeated, leading the Khmer Rouge to shell the Soviet Embassy when they entered Pnom Penh.

One reason the Soviet model has turned sour, Kennan suggests, is that the Kremlin leaders have proved themselves more interested in its dictatorial implications than in the Socialist essence of the Marxist idea. Their preachings to others have smacked of hypocritical self-interest and reeked of intellectual arrogance.

Ideology has given the Kremlin a long-range perspective conducive to perseverance, patience, and confidence in times of trouble. It has cloaked decisions with a veneer of wisdom and proffered to others a pseudo-scientific program for emulation. Though dogmatic in important respects, Marxism-Leninism has also permitted great flexibility of tactics. At times it has draped blinders over Soviet eyes, obstructing or distorting their perception of events at home and abroad. More important, it has interfered with free discussion—on all levels of Soviet society—of those realities and what to do about them.

I believe that the basic source of the successes as well as of the failures of the Soviet regime since 1917 has been the *kto kovo*—"who's going to do in whom?"—premise of the Communist worldview and of Soviet political culture.* Unlike Western theorists, who posited a natural harmony of interest among individuals and nations, Lenin and his colleagues assumed that dialectical conflict rules all material and human existence, and above all in politics. They tended, in short, to see domestic as well as foreign policy in zero-sum terms: "Whatever the other side wins, we lose; and vice versa." This led the Bolsheviks to expect no quarter, and give no quarter, unless temporary weakness so compelled. To be sure, they were willing at times to compromise with the adversary, even to enter provisional coalitions with him, on the assumption that when conditions matured, the struggle would resume.

This worldview put a premium on self-reliance. Expecting that they must ultimately rely on their own resources, the Soviet leaders held fast even when the European proletariat failed to come to their aid in 1918-21; they industrialized Russia even when the Great Depression compelled an autarkic approach; they deflected for two years Hitler's *Drang nach Osten* by a spectacular *bouleversement des alliances*; they resisted Hitler's onslaught and turned the tide of battle by 1943, before major aid arrived from the East; they rebuilt their war-torn economy without Western credits after 1945.

While self-reliance is a virtue in the life of individuals and states, it does not yield optimal results if it fails to tap the potential inherent in strategies of mutual aid and burden-sharing. Such strategies benefit from comparative advantages and the division of labor. Thus the USSR and its East European vassals managed to raise their economic product after World War II but fell far short of the gains within reach had they participated in the European Recovery Plan. Similarly, the Kremlin achieved its security objectives primarily by building up its own deterrent force rather than by reaching arms controls to

mutual advantage with the United States. The result is that each superpower has a rather dependable second-strike capacity, but this was acquired at levels far higher and more expensive than necessary for the purpose of maintaining a secure deterrent.

Thus the same *kto kovo* assumptions that have helped the Soviet Communists nourish their own strengths have had another, and basically counterproductive, aspect. *Kto kovo* has undermined the willingness and ability of the Soviet Communist party to pursue long-term strategies of mutual aid with other governments (as, indeed, with individuals and rival political movements within the Soviet state). Projecting their own determination to do-in all rivals, the Soviets have tended to expect the worst from other political actors—at home as well as abroad. This is the root reason why the Soviet leadership has alienated potential collaborators abroad—in the West, in China, and in the Third World. Even where the Bolsheviks expected to find allies, as among the European workers, they have often antagonized them by claims to omniscience and a concomitant right to dictate even where local circumstances diverge sharply from Soviet conditions. Though the Kremlin may protest that its motives are pure, it faces a yawning credibility gap from Yerevan to Tallin, from Peking to Pittsburgh.

Messianism, coupled with profound anxieties of insecurity and inferiority, has permeated Russian policymaking for centuries. These patterns have been reinforced by the Bolshevik assumptions of *kto kovo* and clairvoyant self-righteousness. The result has been a tendency to pursue policies oriented toward zero-sum exploitation rather than mutual aid. The Soviet Communists have failed to learn history's lesson that enlightened self-interest dictates long-term cooperation with other actors, within and without one's own country. Though born more in idealism than in materialism, Soviet communism has gravitated toward cynical realism, rationalizing that all means are justified to achieve its lofty aims. This realism has boomeranged, if not devouring its children then emaciating them.

The tragedy is that the Soviet rulers have not yet reached the point at which they are ready to cooperate in interdependence with their own subjects or with the other peoples with whom they share planet earth. None of us is justified in casting a first stone while ethnocentrism and narrow self-seeking pervade world politics, East and West, North and South. But the costs of zero-sum strategies are writ particularly large in the Soviet track record over sixty years, despite—or perhaps partly because of—the CPSU's claim to lead progressive humanity. For the attainment of Soviet goals, such strategies have tended to be counterproductive. But they have also jeopardized Western objectives. To the extent possible, therefore, Western policymakers should shape their words and deeds to provide attractive and feasible models of mutually advantageous cooperation, keeping the doors open to Soviet participation in global programs in which the USSR could both contribute and receive.

*For background see the author's "Kto Kovo? The Present Danger, as Seen From Moscow," *Worldview* (September, 1977).